

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Monday, October 5, 2009

The Center of Clayton – OASIS Room B

The following members were present:

Alex Berger	Dick Hyde
Ira Berkowitz	Jessie Hoagland
Judy Goodman	Eric Schneider
Rosemary Hardy	Mark Winings

Excused/Absent

Mimi Deem
Robert Kerr

Also present:

Susan Renard
Toni Siering

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the August meeting were approved as written.

Addresses from the Audience

There was no audience present at the Commission meeting.

Inclusion Playground

Ms. DeForrest stated that the Parks and Recreation department is working on the Inclusion Playground design. Posters of the different designs were reviewed during the meeting. Game Time and Cre8tive Play are the companies who worked selected to put the designs together. In the pictures, various pieces of equipment had castle themes. Our plan is to have a tree house theme. It will have older and younger children areas.

Other proposed features include:

- A spray ground, which is a water feature
- Poured in place flooring, which has a tile look so one piece can be replaced at a time instead of one continuous floor. The surface has a 10 year guarantee.
- Log slide
- Tree top canopies with leaves on the tops of them
- Mushroom pods
- Bark areas that animals can be carved into
- Ramped entry points – all components are accessible
- Six swings
- A designated free play area where children can run
- Benches and other seating areas for parents

There will be a sensory garden where the current play area is located. A walking path will also be located in the area around the playground. Blind children will be able to find their way around the playground because it will have sound and Braille elements.

The current playground area is about 1/4 acre. The new playground will be at least twice the size of the existing playground. Ms. Goodman stated that she really likes the idea of the playground having a natural look and blending in with the parks as much as possible.

The grant application is due at the end of October. Ms. DeForrest noted that we are held accountable for the estimated cost of the project and will need to show how we are making this playground inclusive for all children with disabilities. The final design can vary a bit from the original proposal; however, it should generally remain similar in scope. We will hear if we were awarded the grant by the end of December or very early January. Bids for the projects will go out in January of 2010 and building will not begin until February. The estimated cost of the project is \$500,000. For the grant, the City of Clayton is required to pay 5% of the cost and has budgeted to pay at least \$25,000. The Clayton Century Foundation has also committed to contributing to the project.

We still have a few steps to complete in this process. Families have been surveyed and the primary things they want to be included are: shaded benches, no blocked areas where they cannot see their children and they would like the playground to have a fence around it. Ms.

Renard solved some water supply issues with one of our contractors. The maintenance and cleaning of the playground is relatively simple. Ms. DeForrest noted that we can we can save some money on the installation costs by having a community building day. Mr. Schneider made a motion to establish a park assembly volunteer day with the Parks and Recreation Commission for the Inclusion Playground. Mr. Berger seconded the motion. All presented voted in favor of a community build day.

Director's Report

Our fiscal year ended on September 30, 2009. We exceeded revenue by \$25,000, and we saved \$50,000-\$60,000 in expenses due to savings in utilities and personnel. Shaw Park Aquatic Center had another outstanding year; revenue was \$280,000 and expenses were \$180,000. The Shade Structures are being installed, and they did not run into any problems when digging into the deck.

The Chip and Seal treatment of the roads in Shaw Park is underway and next Wednesday, October 14 the final clean up will take place. Trail construction at Oak Knoll Park is going well.

In October, we have several special events. Saturday, October 10 is the Hanley House Fall Festival from 12:00 pm-4:00 pm, and then from 4:00 pm-6:00 pm is the Hoppn' Fundraiser - guests aged 21 and older will have the chance to sample hand crafted beer and Michelob craft beer. Music will be played on the front porch of the Hanley House during this time. The Big Read is also on October 10 in front of Clayton High School. Party in the Patch will be held on Friday, October 16 from 6:00-8:30 pm.

The ball field project started and will be completed in 4-6 weeks. There is new lighting in on these fields, which is outstanding. The Tennis Center project has been moved to 2010 because Ms. DeForrest felt as if we were going to have to rush through this project. She is going to do some research to see if there is a less expensive surfacing option.

Dog Parks

Ms. DeForrest distributed a Dog Park packet, which includes research and other data collected from 1997 through 2007 when the Dog Park sub-committee was formed. (Please refer to the attached Dog Park file for detailed information.) Mr. Ben Uchitelle came to the Parks and Recreation Commission in 2007 to discuss the possibilities and benefits of having a Dog Park in Clayton. After much research the plans were put on hold for various reasons. The sub-committee stopped collecting data when they were about to survey the community. The Parks and Recreation Master plan states that the City of Clayton should only consider a Dog Park if new land becomes available.

Ms. DeForrest informed the Commission that a group of residents met with her and the City Manager, Mr. Craig Owens to discuss the possibility of meeting with the Commission to discuss their desire for a Dog Park in Clayton. Mr. Winings stated that the Commission is a perfect place to have a forum. He asked Ms. DeForrest if the residents interested in presenting about the Dog Park know what the consultants concluded. Ms. DeForrest and Ms. Goodman said the advocates of the Dog Park are well aware of the reference in the Master Plan. Mr. Winings then noted that there is some value to hearing these people out. The decision was made to hear how these individuals envision a Dog Park in Clayton. The Commission will use the scorecard developed from the Master plan to evaluate the possibilities of having a Dog Park including funding and if the community sees it as a priority.

The recommendation is to have at least an acre of land for a Dog Park and the City of Clayton doesn't have this much land available. Parking issues are also a concern. Ms. Goodman brought up the idea of doing something temporary near east Forsyth or at the Schnucks site.

Old Business / New Business

Ms. Hardy said the new community garden is going well. The children in the neighborhood are so respectful of the gardens. Residents are growing various kinds of plants, fruits and veggies in their gardens.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Denise Ucinski